

High School Dropouts 2010-11 Massachusetts Public Schools

The annual high school dropout report represents a snapshot of those students who dropped out of school in any given year. The data contained in this dropout report reflect one year of dropout data across grades nine through twelve and not a particular cohort of students across four years. This report provides annual dropout data to education leaders to develop and strengthen dropout prevention programs in the state. To serve this purpose well, the Department has made several refinements to the dropout calculations over the past few years. Some of these refinements, summarized below, make it difficult to make year-to-year comparisons.

Please note that the Department has also calculated and released graduations rates for the 2011 cohort that provide a more complete picture of the outcomes of high school students in Massachusetts. It is important to keep in mind that the dropout data contained in the graduation rate reports is a cohort dropout rate and shows the cumulative effect of students dropping out over four years. The graduation rate reports can be viewed at: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/infoservices/reports/gradrates/>.

In the 2010-11 school year, 7,894 or 2.7 percent of students in grades nine through twelve dropped out of school.

Table 1: State Dropout Trends: 2000-01 to 2010-11

	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
Total HS Enrollment	271,700	273,912	281,939	288,329	293,399	296,511	298,033	295,937	292,372	290,502	289,161
Number of Dropouts	9,380	8,422 ¹	9,389	10,633	11,145	9,910	11,436	9,959	8,585	8,296	7,894
Dropout Rate	3.5%	3.1%	3.3%	3.7%	3.8%	3.3%	3.8%	3.4%	2.9%	2.9%	2.7%

The Department did not make any major changes to the Student Information Management System (SIMS) data collection in the 2010-11 school year. However the fluctuation in dropout rates between 2004-05 and 2006-07 can be attributed to two significant modifications. These modifications in the dropout calculation provide more comprehensive information on dropouts to help inform policy and programmatic decisions.

In the **2005-06** school year, the Department began to cross-reference SIMS data with the General Educational Development (GED) Testing Service database. In prior school years, the Department relied solely on district notification regarding students who received their GED. As a result, the Department more accurately tracks students who drop out of high school and then earn a GED therefore decreasing the number of students who are considered final dropouts.

In the **2006-07** school year, the Department modified the SIMS data element, *Enrollment Status at Time of Data Collection*. In prior years, districts would report the number of students who indicated that they were transferring to another district and the Department excluded them from the dropout calculations. The expanded dropout and transfer codes provide additional information to the Department on students' plans after leaving the district. Those students who were coded as a transfer to an in-state public school with no record of re-enrollment in another school district before October 1st of the following school year are now considered to be dropouts.

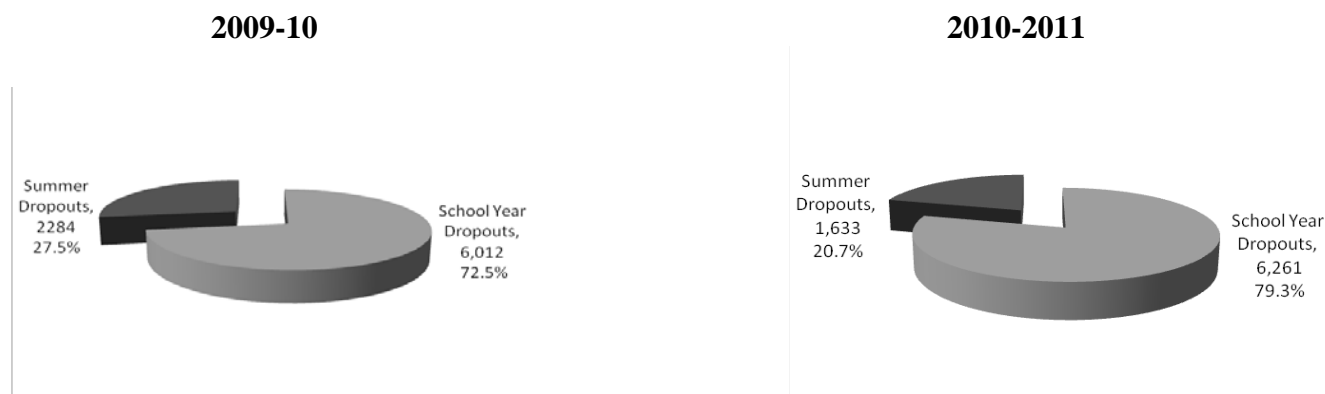
¹ Due to changes in the Student Information Management System (SIMS) summer dropouts were not included in the analysis, therefore resulting in an underreported dropout count.

Table 2: Final Enrollment Status of the 2010-11 Dropout Count

Code	Final Enrollment Status	Number of Dropouts	Percent of all Dropouts
Transfer	Transfer to an in-state public school (with no record of re-enrollment)	1,567	19.9%
Dropout	Enrolled in a non-diploma granting adult education program	1,188	15.0%
	Entered Job Corps	181	2.3%
	Entered the military	10	0.1%
	Incarcerated, district is no longer providing educational services	51	0.6%
	Left school due to employment	210	2.7%
	Confirmed dropout - plans unknown	2,549	32.3%
	Student's status/location unknown	2,138	27.1%
Total Dropout Count		7,894	100%

The final dropout count is based on two groups of students; summer and school year dropouts. Summer dropouts were reported in the October 1, 2010 SIMS submission as a dropout or a transfer to an in-state public school (with no record of re-enrollment) prior to the beginning of the 2010-11 school year, whereas school year dropouts were reported as either a dropout or as a transfer to in-state public (with no record of re-enrollment) during the 2010-11 school year. For 2010-11, the percentage of summer dropouts decreased by 6.8 percentage points while the percentage of school year dropouts increased as compared to the 2009-10 dropout count.

Figure 2: Comparison of the Summer and School Year Dropouts Composing the Total Dropout Counts in 2009-10 and 2010-11



Beginning in the 2003-04 school year, in compliance with the National Center for Education Statistics reporting guidelines, summer dropouts were applied to the grade in which they failed to enroll. Therefore, students who completed grade eight but did not enroll in grade nine were included in the analysis as grade nine summer dropouts.

Table 3: Comparison of 2010-11 Summer Dropouts and School Year Dropouts by Grade

			Number of Dropouts	Total Grade Dropouts	Percent of Grade Dropouts
Grade	9	Summer	298	2,049	14.5%
		School Year	1,751		85.5%
	10	Summer	390	2,011	19.4%
		School Year	1,621		80.6%
	11	Summer	323	1,890	17.1%
		School Year	1,567		82.9%
	12	Summer	622	1,944	32.0%
		School Year	1,322		68.0%

Beginning with the class of 2010, the Department required students to meet the following requirements to earn a Competency Determination (CD) in order to graduate from high school²:

1. Meet or exceed the Proficient threshold scaled score of 240 on the English Language Arts and Mathematics grade 10 Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) tests, or (b) meet or exceed the Needs Improvement threshold scaled score of 220 on the English Language Arts and Mathematics grade 10 MCAS tests and fulfill the requirements of an Educational Proficiency Plan.
2. Meet or exceed the Needs Improvement threshold scaled score of 220 on the Science and Technology/Engineering MCAS test

Students who did not pass the grade ten MCAS had the opportunity to pass the MCAS through re-test opportunities before their scheduled graduation date. Among both grade eleven and grade twelve dropouts, 58.0 percent had earned a CD by meeting the new standard before dropping out of school.

Table 4: Dropout Rates and Percent of Dropouts Among Competency Determination (CD) Earners and Students without a CD

Grade	CD Status	Number of Enrolled Students	Number of Dropouts	Dropout Rate	Percent of Dropouts
11	With CD	64,242	885	1.4%	46.8%
	Without CD	6,315	1,005	15.9%	53.2%
12	With CD	64,945	1,337	2.1%	68.8%
	Without CD	2,771	607	21.9%	31.2%
Total	With CD	129,187	2,222	1.7%	58.0%
	Without CD	9,086	1,612	17.7%	42.0%

² Data in this section can only be compared to tables from 2010; data from years prior to 2010 is not comparable because of this policy change. Additional information on the Competency Determination standards can be found at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr30.html?section=03>.

Table 5: Annual Dropout Data for Selected Demographics: 2010-11

		Total HS Enrollment	Percent of HS Enrollment	Number of Dropouts	Annual Dropout Rate	Percent of all Dropouts
Grade	9th	77,787	26.9%	2,049	2.6%	26.0%
	10th	73,101	25.3%	2,011	2.8%	25.5%
	11th	70,557	24.4%	1,890	2.7%	23.9%
	12th	67,716	23.4%	1,944	2.9%	24.6%
Race/ Ethnicity	Asian	14,775	5.1%	262	1.8%	3.3%
	Black	25,559	8.8%	1,226	4.8%	15.5%
	Hispanic	40,507	14.0%	2,840	7.0%	36.0%
	Multi-Race, Non-Hispanic	5,191	1.8%	131	2.5%	1.7%
	Native American	746	0.3%	25	3.4%	0.3%
	Native Hawaiian	344	0.1%	15	4.4%	0.2%
	White	202,039	69.9%	3,395	1.7%	43.0%
Gender	Female	142,022	49.1%	3,202	2.3%	40.6%
	Male	147,139	50.9%	4,692	3.2%	59.4%

The annual dropout rate for Black students decreased for the fifth consecutive school year, and the rate for Hispanic students decreased for the fourth consecutive year. Rates for grade 9, 10, and 12 also dropped by 0.2 percentage points and male and female rates each dropped by 0.1 percentage point.

Table 6: Annual Dropout Rates for Selected Demographics: 2003-04 to 2010-11

		2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
Grade	9	2.6% ³	3.0%	3.0%	3.9%	3.0%	2.8%	2.8%	2.6%
	10	3.7%	3.7%	3.3%	3.7%	3.5%	2.9%	3.0%	2.8%
	11	4.0%	4.1%	3.3%	3.6%	3.3%	2.7%	2.6%	2.7%
	12	4.8%	4.7%	3.9%	4.1%	3.7%	3.1%	3.1%	2.9%
Race/ Ethnicity⁴	Asian	2.7%	2.6%	2.2%	2.6%	2.0%	1.7%	1.6%	1.8%
	Black	6.3%	6.3%	6.8%	6.4%	5.8%	5.6%	5.1%	4.8%
	Hispanic	8.2%	9.1%	7.9%	9.1%	8.3%	7.5%	7.4%	7.0%
	Multi-Race, Non-Hispanic	-	-	2.8%	4.2%	3.5%	3.4%	3.2%	2.5%
	Native American	6.4%	5.4%	5.4%	4.9%	7.3%	4.3%	3.8%	3.4%
	Native Hawaiian	-	-	7.0%	4.2%	6.7%	3.8%	5.3%	4.4%
	White	2.8%	2.8%	2.3%	2.7%	2.2%	1.8%	1.8%	1.7%
Gender	Female	3.1%	3.2%	2.8%	3.3%	2.9%	2.5%	2.4%	2.3%
	Male	4.3%	4.4%	3.8%	4.4%	3.8%	3.4%	3.3%	3.2%

³ In the 2003-04 school year, the Department removed the data for students expected to enroll in grade nine due to an incomplete data collection. The Department presumes that if the grade eight missing students were included in the summer dropout count, the grade nine dropout rate in 2003-04 might be slightly higher.

⁴ In the 2005-06 school year, the Department changed the race/ethnicity categories to comply with the federal Office of Management and Budget reporting guidelines.

Table 7: Annual Dropout Data by Race/Ethnicity and Gender: 2010-11

		HS Enrollment	Percent of HS Enrollment	Number of Dropouts	Annual Dropout Rate	Percent of all Dropouts
Asian	Female	7,363	2.5%	108	1.5%	1.4%
	Male	7,412	2.6%	154	2.1%	2.0%
Black	Female	12,452	4.3%	509	4.1%	6.4%
	Male	13,107	4.5%	717	5.5%	9.1%
Hispanic	Female	19,797	6.8%	1,182	6.0%	15.0%
	Male	20,710	7.2%	1,658	8.0%	21.0%
Multi-Race, Non- Hispanic	Female	2,689	0.9%	51	1.9%	0.6%
	Male	2,502	0.9%	80	3.2%	1.0%
Native American	Female	375	0.1%	11	2.9%	0.1%
	Male	371	0.1%	14	3.8%	0.2%
Native Hawaiian	Female	167	0.1%	6	3.6%	0.1%
	Male	177	0.1%	9	5.1%	0.1%
White	Female	99,179	34.3%	1,335	1.3%	16.9%
	Male	102,860	35.6%	2,060	2.0%	26.1%

Table 8: Annual Dropout Rates by Race/Ethnicity and Gender: 2003-04 to 2010-11

		2003-04	2004-05		2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
Asian	Female	2.0%	2.2%		2.1%	2.4%	1.6%	1.3%	1.3%	1.5%
	Male	3.5%	3.0%		2.3%	2.8%	2.4%	2.1%	1.9%	2.1%
Black	Female	4.9%	5.2%		5.5%	5.1%	5.2%	4.5%	4.3%	4.1%
	Male	7.6%	7.5%		8.1%	7.6%	6.5%	6.6%	5.8%	5.5%
Hispanic	Female	7.0%	7.7%		6.8%	8.1%	7.5%	6.4%	6.5%	6.0%
	Male	9.4%	10.4%		9.0%	10.0%	9.1%	8.5%	8.3%	8.0%
Multi-Race, Non- Hispanic	Female	-	-		2.2%	3.5%	2.6%	2.9%	2.8%	1.9%
	Male	-	-		3.5%	4.9%	4.5%	4.0%	3.6%	3.2%
Native American	Female	5.0%	3.9%		4.9%	4.1%	7.1%	3.0%	2.9%	2.9%
	Male	7.8%	6.9%		5.8%	5.7%	7.5%	5.7%	4.8%	3.8%
Native Hawaiian	Female	-	-		4.6%	3.3%	6.8%	3.1%	2.5%	3.6%
	Male	-	-		9.2%	5.1%	6.7%	4.5%	8.0%	5.1%
White	Female	2.3%	2.4%		1.9%	2.3%	1.9%	1.5%	1.4%	1.3%
	Male	3.3%	3.2%		2.6%	3.1%	2.5%	2.1%	2.1%	2.0%

Multi-Race, Non-Hispanic females had an annual dropout rate that was 0.9 percentage points lower than the 2009-10 school year. This represents the largest decrease in the annual dropout rate among the ten largest race/gender combinations in the state. In addition, Hispanic males and females, Black males and females, Multi-Race Non-Hispanic males, and Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander males had an annual dropout rate at least 0.2 percentage points lower than the 2009-10 school year.

Table 9: Annual Dropout Rates for Special Populations: 2010-11

		Total HS Enrollment	Percent of HS Enrollment	Number of Dropouts	Annual Dropout Rate	Percent of all Dropouts
Special Education	Special Education	45,059	15.6%	2,088	4.6%	26.5%
	General Education	244,102	84.4%	5,806	2.4%	73.5%
Limited English Proficient (LEP)	LEP	12,444	4.3%	981	7.9%	12.4%
	Non LEP	276,717	95.7%	6,913	2.5%	87.6%
Low-Income	Low-Income	92,704	32.1%	4,453	4.8%	56.4%
	Non Low-Income	196,457	67.9%	3,441	1.8%	43.6%

Table 10: Annual Dropout Rates for Special Populations: 2003-04 to 2010-11

		2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
Special Education	Special Education	5.4%	5.6%	5.1%	5.8%	5.5%	5.0%	4.7%	4.6%
	General Education	3.4%	3.5%	3.0%	3.5%	3.0%	2.6%	2.5%	2.4%
LEP	LEP	7.6%	9.3%	9.5%	10.4%	8.8%	8.5%	8.5%	7.9%
	Non LEP	3.5%	3.6%	3.1%	3.6%	3.2%	2.7%	2.6%	2.5%
Low-Income	Low-Income	5.7%	6.4%	5.5%	5.8%	5.5%	5.0%	4.7%	4.8%
	Non Low-Income	3.1%	3.0%	2.6%	3.2%	2.6%	2.1%	2.0%	1.8%

Table 11: Annual Dropout Rates by School Type 2003-04 to 2010-11

	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
Regular/Comprehensive Academic Schools (309)⁵	3.7%	3.7%	3.4%	3.7%	3.1%	3.0%	2.9%	2.8%
Vocational-Technical Total (39)	3.2%	3.0%	2.2%	2.6%	2.2%	1.9%	1.8%	1.6%
City/Town (9)	7.2%	6.0%	4.7%	5.5%	5.0%	5.1%	5.0%	4.4%
Regional/County/Independent (30)	2.1%	2.3%	1.5%	1.8%	1.4%	1.0%	0.9%	0.9%
Charter Schools (33)⁶	5.6%	6.1%	4.2%	6.4%	7.7%	3.8%	5.3%	4.2%
Schools Located in Cities⁷ (171)	5.6%	5.8%	5.3%	5.7%	5.3%	4.8%	4.7%	4.5%
Schools Located in Towns (210)	2.0%	1.9%	1.6%	1.9%	1.6%	1.4%	1.4%	1.2%

⁵ Represents the number of schools in the category in the 2010-11 school year.

⁶ Represents all charter schools with enrollment in grades nine through twelve, including those whose primary mission is to serve at-risk students

The state dropout rate masks the wide disparity in individual school annual dropout rates, specifically the number of schools that have dropout rates below the state rate. The following chart illustrates the distribution of school dropout rates

Table 12: Annual Dropout Rates Among Schools: 2004-05 to 2010-11⁸

	2004-05		2005-06		2006-07		2007-08		2008-09		2009-10		2010-11	
<i>Number of Schools Included</i>	336		339		344		355		353		354		354	
Annual Rate	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
0	11	3	20	6	10	3	18	5	16	5	11	3	12	3
0.1 – 1.0	74	22	88	26	65	19	85	24	117	33	107	30	129	36
1.1 – 2.5	90	27	97	29	101	30	101	28	97	27	104	29	102	29
2.6 – 5.0	94	28	71	21	93	28	73	21	73	21	70	20	54	15
5.1 – 7.5	23	7	26	8	33	10	30	8	27	8	29	8	24	7
7.6 – 10.0	15	4	8	2	12	4	10	3	6	2	9	3	7	2
10.1 and above	29	9	29	9	30	9	38	11	27	8	24	7	26	7

⁷ As defined by the incorporation status within the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

⁸ Only includes schools with enrollment of 75 students or more as dropout rates for schools with low enrollments are overly sensitive to small variations.